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THE SWEDISH BORDER OPENS FOR INCREASED FISH EXPORT FROM NORWAY?

Counter-ready fish products from Trondelag to Middle Sweden can become a major market: there has been a meeting in the Norway-Sweden Mid-North Cooperative at Froya June 10-11 (1980) which opens up such opportunities. Norwegian and Middle-Swedish fisheries interests meet here to plan regular future deliveries of fish products over the Divide from Trondelag. To be able to assure firm deliveries on a major scale to Middle Sweden, Trondelag must make firm contacts with the northerly counties (Norwegian) to supplement the Trondelag fishery.

Swedish eating habits are essentially unlike Norwegian. Most working Swedes eat dinner on the job and not at home. This is because the Swedes get to buy cheap dinner dishes at their workplace. These dinners offer, in addition to being cheap, tax benefits which make it cheaper to eat on the job than at home. The arrangement is a result of the Swedes having a longer working day than Norwegians, broken by a full hour's dinner hour around noon.

The Swedes are therefore interested in portion-packed "counter-ready" fish which can be prepared quickly in the factory kitchens -- or for the folks at home, there in the home.

For the time being this fish export is in the planning stage. Until now there have not been regular deliveries to Sweden from Trondelag -- and those deliveries which have taken place have fallen off in recent years.

The arrangement currently being negotiated will give a regularly organized delivery to Middle Sweden.

The idea is that a central agency will take charge of the exporting of fish -- so the business can be coordinated and well managed.

Several large Swedish distribution interests are concerned in dealing with Trondelag. In several areas of Middle Sweden the volume of particular fish species has been so small that a special marketing plan and import arrangements may be needed. For example, on the average Middle Swedes take a fish dinner once a week. while Southern Swedes take a fish dinner twice a week.

The meeting at Froya concluded further that the Swedes primarily are interested in fresh, processed fish. The products should to the greatest extent possible be processed and packed as "counter-ready" wares, ready for sale to the consumer market.

It is a deciding consideration that the products should be of good quality, properly packaged and labelled, and preferably with dates indicated.

Customs declarations are also called for.

Handling guidelines for fish are evidently stricter in Sweden than in Norway in certain respects.

There was also an expression of interest in whole, vacuum-packed fish, for instance salmon, trout, mackerel, and crab.

There is advantage to having a product council which can judge the fish products on a continuing basis and give more precise indications as to what

fish product-types, what packaging, weight (etc.) had best be given priority. In the preliminary period priority should be given to a limited range of products.

Eating habits are in several respects different as between Sweden and Norway. It is important for that reason to pay attention to this in relation both to production and marketing.

New processing methods should be considered. Preserving with CO_2 in consumer packages and transport packaging should be further evaluated.

Each of the participants from Sweden was asked to get in touch with his/her corporate connections for discussion of pros and cons of expanded cooperative marketing of Norwegian fish and fish products. Written reaction is expected from the Norwegian side. The contact person is Jarle Wanvik.

The representative from processors in Helgeland expressed interest in participating in the marketing of fish products in Sweden. Helgeland has considerable quantities of fish annually.

There was agreement on working further with the project. Jarle Wanvik has assumed project leadership.

It is planned to hold a meeting in Sweden in September (1980) to set up a working group for promoting the project.